

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original): A quilting apparatus for guiding a sewing machine relative to at least one layer of fabric, the quilting apparatus comprising:

 a quilting frame shaped to dispose the fabric in a substantially planar orientation defined by lateral and longitudinal dimensions;

 a support structure removably mountable to a working surface to attach the quilting frame to the working surface; and

 a carriage assembly disposed to transport the sewing machine with respect to the fabric along the lateral and longitudinal dimensions.

Claim 2 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 1, wherein the support structure comprises a support leg having an L-shape with a generally horizontal portion that rests on and lies along the working surface, and a generally vertical portion to which the quilting frame is attached.

Claim 3 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 2, wherein the quilting frame is attachable at multiple positions along the generally vertical portion to permit adjustment of a height of the quilting frame over the working surface.

Claim 4 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 1, wherein the carriage assembly is supported by the working surface.

Claim 5 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 4, wherein the carriage assembly comprises a lower carriage component supported by the working surface and constrained to move along one of the lateral and longitudinal dimensions, and an upper carriage component supported by the lower carriage component and constrained to move along the other of the lateral and longitudinal

dimensions, the upper carriage component comprising a surface on which the sewing machine is removably disposable.

Claim 6 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 4, further comprising a track removably disposable on the working surface, wherein the carriage assembly is guided by the track.

Claim 7 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 1, wherein the quilting frame comprises two opposing end plates extending along the lateral dimension, each of the end plates comprising a plurality of receiving apertures positioned to receive a plurality of support members extending longitudinally between the end plates to act as spools for storing at least a portion of the fabric.

Claim 8 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 7, wherein each of the end plates comprises a one-piece structure that permits positioning of the fabric in the substantially planar orientation independent of attachment of the quilting frame to the working surface.

Claim 9 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 7, wherein each of the support members comprises a one-piece structure with a fixed length such that the end plates are separated by a fixed, non-adjustable displacement.

Claim 10 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 7, wherein each of the support members comprises an adjustable length to permit adjustment of a longitudinal dimension of the quilting frame to a length of the working surface.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A quilting apparatus for guiding a sewing machine relative to at least one layer of fabric, the quilting apparatus comprising:

a quilting frame shaped to dispose the fabric in a substantially planar orientation defined by lateral and longitudinal dimensions;

a support structure that disposes the quilting frame at an adjustable height above a working surface, wherein the support structure comprises a support leg having an L-shape with a

generally horizontal portion that rests on and lies along the working surface, and a generally vertical portion to which the quilting frame is attached; and

a carriage assembly disposed to transport the sewing machine with respect to the fabric along the lateral and longitudinal dimensions.

Claim 12 (canceled)

Claim 13 (currently amended): The quilting apparatus of claim ~~12~~11, wherein the vertical portion comprises a slotted opening that cooperates with an adjustable mechanism attached to the quilting frame, wherein the adjustable mechanism releasably grips the vertical portion to dispose the quilting frame at the adjustable height.

Claim 14 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 13, wherein the adjustable mechanism comprises a knob that threadably engages the quilting frame through the slotted opening.

Claims 15-17 (canceled)

Claim 18 (original): A quilting apparatus for guiding a sewing machine relative to at least one layer of fabric, the quilting apparatus comprising:

a quilting frame shaped to dispose the fabric in a substantially planar orientation defined by lateral and longitudinal dimensions;

a first track removably disposable on a working surface; and

a carriage assembly supported by the working surface such that the carriage assembly is guided by the first track to transport the sewing machine with respect to the fabric.

Claim 19 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 18, further comprising a second track removably disposable on the working surface, parallel to the first track, such that the first and second tracks cooperate to guide the carriage assembly.

Claim 20 (original): The quilting apparatus of claim 18, wherein the carriage assembly comprises a plurality of wheels disposed to ride along the first track.

Claim 21 (original): A method for guiding a sewing machine relative to at least one layer of fabric mounted on a quilting frame, the method comprising:

using the quilting frame to dispose the fabric in a substantially planar orientation defined by lateral and longitudinal dimensions;

removably mounting a support structure to a working surface to attach the quilting frame to the working surface; and

guiding the sewing machine with respect to the fabric along the lateral and longitudinal dimensions via a carriage assembly.

Claim 22 (original): The method of claim 21, wherein the support structure comprises a support leg having an L-shape with a generally horizontal portion and a generally vertical portion, wherein removably mounting the support structure to the working surface comprises resting the generally horizontal portion on the working surface such that the generally horizontal portion lies along the working surface, and attaching the quilting frame to the generally vertical portion.

Claim 23 (original): The method of claim 22, wherein the quilting frame is attachable at multiple positions along the generally vertical portion, the method further comprising adjusting a height of the quilting frame over the working surface by attaching the quilting frame to the vertical portion at one of the positions.

Claim 24 (original): The method of claim 21, further comprising disposing the carriage assembly such that the carriage assembly is supported by the working surface.

Claim 25 (original): The method of claim 24, wherein the carriage assembly comprises a lower carriage component supported by the working surface and an upper carriage component supported by the lower component, the method further comprising:

constraining the lower carriage component to move along one of the lateral and longitudinal dimensions;

constraining the upper carriage component to move along the other of the lateral and longitudinal dimensions; and

removably disposing the sewing machine on a surface of the upper carriage component comprising.

Claim 26 (original): The method of claim 24, further comprising removably disposing a track on the working surface such that the carriage assembly is guided by the track.

Claim 27 (original): The method of claim 21, wherein the quilting frame comprises two opposing end plates extending along the lateral dimension, each of the end plates comprising a plurality of receiving apertures, the method further comprising disposing a plurality of support members to extend longitudinally between the end plates to act as spools for storing at least a portion of the fabric.

Claim 28 (original): The method of claim 27, wherein each of the end plates comprises a one-piece structure, wherein disposing the fabric in a substantially planar orientation is carried out substantially independently of attachment of the quilting frame to the working surface.

Claim 29 (original): The method of claim 27, wherein each of the support members comprises a one-piece structure with a fixed length, wherein disposing the support members to extend longitudinally between the end plates comprises separated by a fixed, non-adjustable displacement.

Claim 30 (original): The method of claim 27, wherein each of the support members comprises an adjustable length, wherein disposing the support members to extend longitudinally between the end plates comprises separating the end plates by an adjustable displacement to permit adjustment of a longitudinal dimension of the quilting frame to a length of the working surface.

Claim 31 (currently amended): A method for guiding a sewing machine relative to at least one layer of fabric mounted on a quilting frame, the method comprising:

using the quilting frame to dispose the fabric in a substantially planar orientation defined by lateral and longitudinal dimensions;

disposing the quilting frame at an adjustable height above a working surface via a support structure, wherein the support structure comprises a support leg having an L-shape with a generally horizontal portion and a generally vertical portion, wherein removably mounting the support structure to the working surface comprises resting the generally horizontal portion on the working surface such that the generally horizontal portion lies along the working surface, and attaching the quilting frame to the generally vertical portion; and

guiding the sewing machine with respect to the fabric along the lateral and longitudinal dimensions via a carriage assembly.

Claim 32 (canceled)

Claim 33 (currently amended): The method of claim ~~32~~31, wherein the vertical portion comprises a slotted opening that cooperates with an adjustable mechanism attached to the quilting frame, wherein disposing the quilting frame at an adjustable height above the working surface comprises releasably gripping the vertical portion with the adjustable mechanism to dispose the quilting frame at the adjustable height.

Claim 34 (original): The method of claim 33, wherein the adjustable mechanism comprises a knob, wherein disposing the quilting frame at an adjustable height further comprises threadably engaging the quilting frame through the slotted opening with the knob.

Claims 35-37 (canceled)

Claim 38 (original): A method for guiding a sewing machine relative to at least one layer of fabric mounted on a quilting frame, the method comprising:

 using the quilting frame to dispose the fabric in a substantially planar orientation defined by lateral and longitudinal dimensions;

 removably disposing a first track on a working surface; and

 using the first track to guide a carriage assembly supported by the working surface to transport the sewing machine with respect to the fabric.

Claim 39 (original): The method of claim 38, further comprising removably disposing a second track on the working surface, parallel to the first track, such that the first and second tracks cooperate to guide the carriage assembly.

Claim 40 (original): The method of claim 38, further comprising attaching a plurality of wheels to the carriage assembly such that the wheels ride along the first track.